

Medication Adherence: Recognizing a Non-Adherent Patient

BEST PRACTICES TO ADDRESS ADHERENCE

STEP 1: Say: *In order to make sure you are getting the most out of your medications, I'd like to ask you a few questions to better understand your needs and offer ways to help you.*

STEP 2: Go through each of the four questions.

STEP 3: Provide strategies to address adherence.

1. Can you tell me about all the medications you take?

If the patient:

- Cannot list the medications prescribed
- Does not understand why he/she is prescribed medications
- Takes “other medications my friends told me about”
- Does not pick up or refill medications from pharmacy
- Takes more or less of a medication than what the doctor prescribed

Then:

Let the doctor know the patient may have trouble understanding his/her medications.

Verify the doctor will:

- Perform a full medication reconciliation.
- Explain why the patient is taking each medicine, how to take it and what side effects to expect.
- Simplify the patient's medications, reduce doses and remove unnecessary medications.

2. Are you having trouble taking your medications due to the cost? If so, what do you do?

If the patient:

- Doesn't pick up medications at the pharmacy
- Only picks up some medicines at the pharmacy
- Cuts pills in half
- Obtains medications from another source (e.g., VA, Mexico, friends)

Then:

Let the doctor know the patient may have trouble with the cost of his/her medications.

Verify the doctor will:

- Prescribe generic drugs and/or lower tier drugs.
- Prescribe a 90-day supply of medications. Most SCAN members save money when they switch to a 90-day supply.
- Simplify the patient's medications, reduce doses and remove unnecessary medications.
- Explain that sharing medications can be harmful.
- Discuss filling prescriptions at a Preferred pharmacy. Most SCAN Health Plan® members will have reduced copays at Preferred pharmacies.
Preferred pharmacies include but are not limited to Walgreens, Rite Aid, Walmart, Costco, Ralphs, Safeway, Albertsons, Express Scripts Home Delivery and select independent pharmacies.

Give the following information to the patient:

- Call SCAN Member Services at 800-559-3500 (TTY: 711) to see if he/she qualifies for Extra Help.

G10502-5 10/17

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3. How do you remind yourself to take your medications?

If the patient:

- Skips doses
- Stops taking his/her medicine
- Can't open bottles, can't read bottle labels for dosage instructions
- Fills his/her different medications at different times of month

Then:

Share the following recommendations as appropriate:

- Create a consistent routine:
 - Use sticky notes as reminders and place them in common areas (bathroom mirror, refrigerator, nightstand, etc.).
 - Combine taking medicine with a daily task (like when brushing teeth or after eating).
 - Keep all medications in one place.
 - Discard old prescriptions.
 - Request easy-open caps and large print labels from pharmacy.
- Ask the patient's pharmacist to synchronize his/her medications, which allows the patient to pick them up at the same time.
- Use a pill box to organize taking medicines.
- Set smartphone reminders.
- Sign up for text message reminders (www.scriptyourfuture.org).
- Sign up for an auto-refill or refill reminder program at the pharmacy.

4. What, if any, side effects do you experience with your medicines?

If the patient:

- Stops taking medicines because of side effects

Then:

Let the doctor know the patient may have trouble with medication side effects.

Verify that the doctor will:

- Prescribe an alternative medication with fewer or no side effects.
- Discuss ways the patient can manage the side effects so he/she continues taking the medication.

The most up-to-date list of covered drugs is on our website.

To search by drug:

www.scanhealthplan.com/lookup-tools/formulary

For a PDF of a specific SCAN plan Formulary:

www.scanhealthplan.com/scan-resources/plan-materials/formulary

For monthly updates and other information:

www.scanhealthplan.com/scan-resources/formulary

